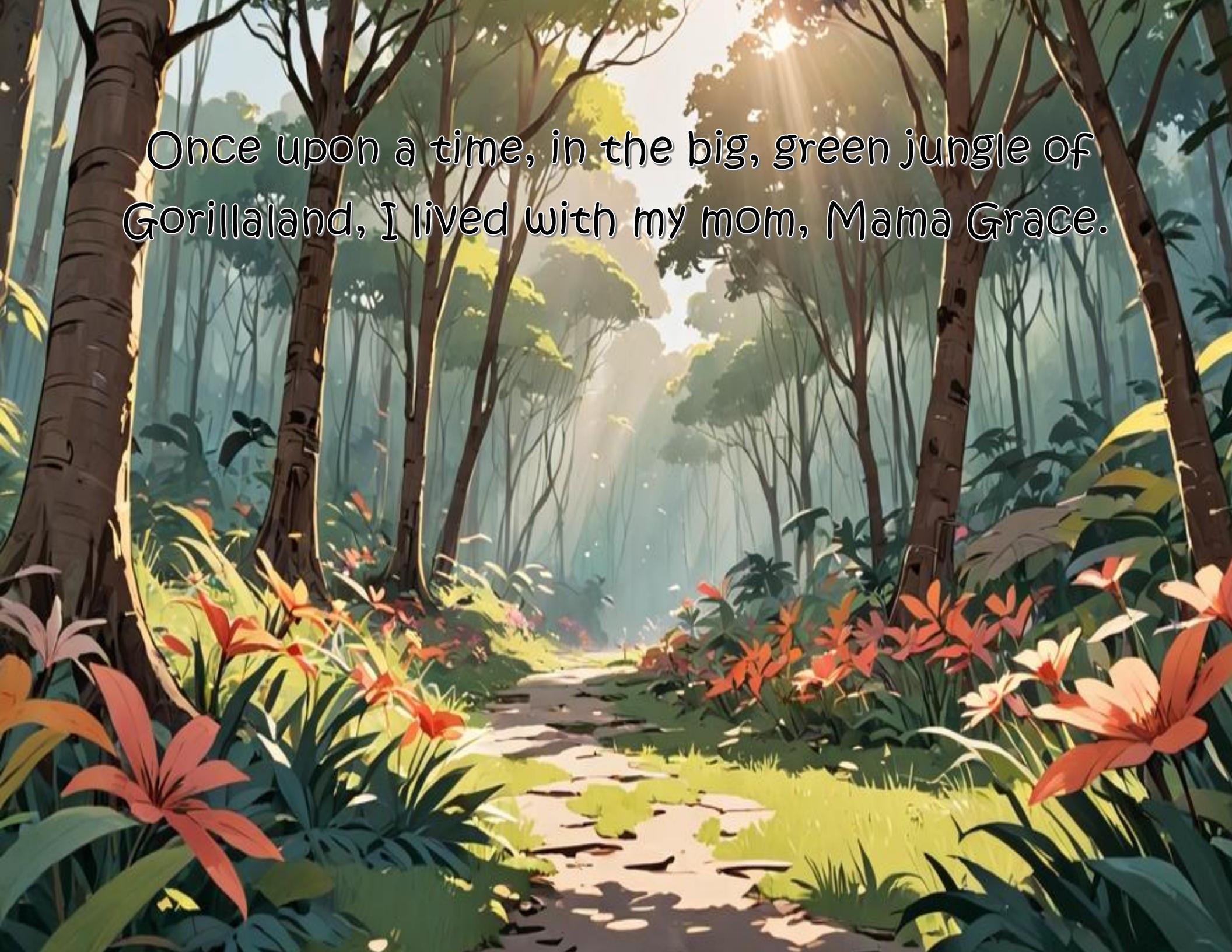


Gus's Grief Adventure: A Gorilla's Tale of Courage and Hope

By: Phillip Mitchell

A lush, tropical jungle scene bathed in warm sunlight. A dirt path leads through the center of the frame, flanked by dense green foliage and vibrant red-orange flowers. The background is filled with tall trees and more sunlight filtering through the canopy.

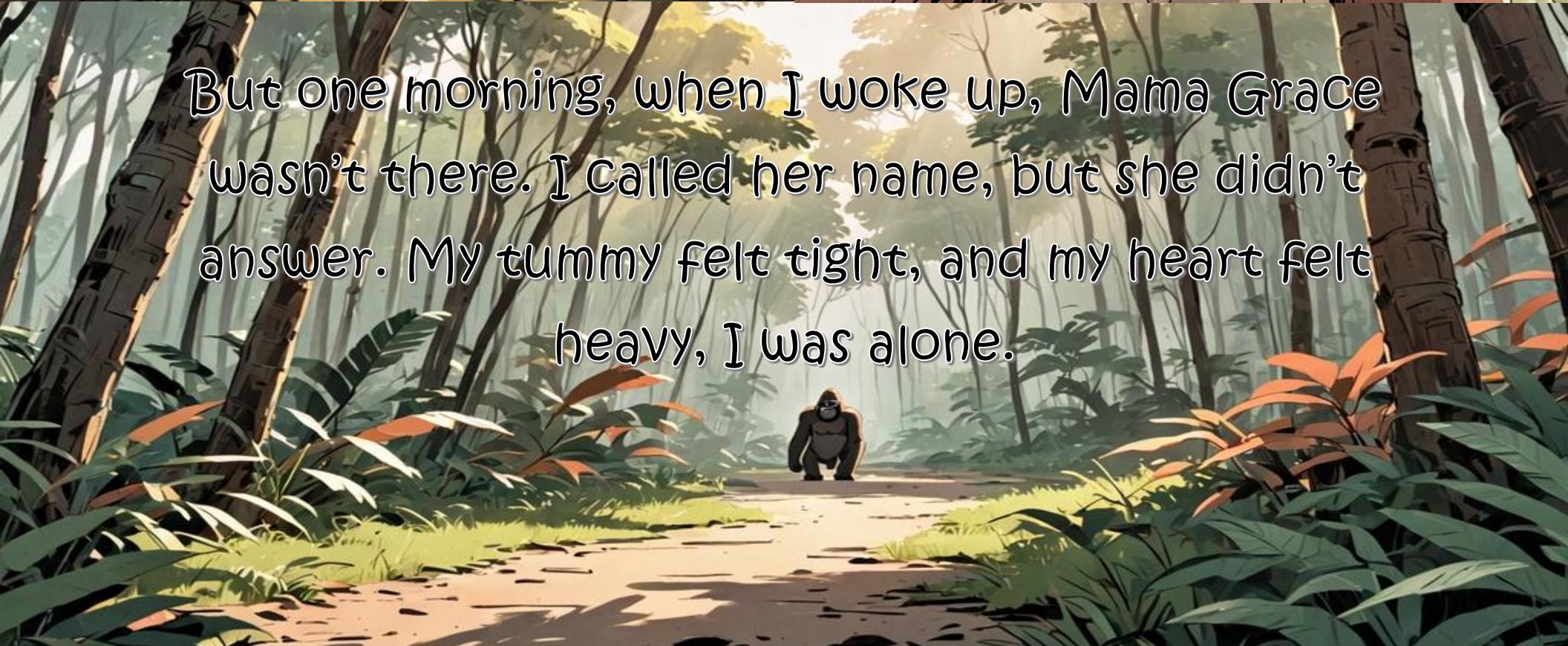
Once upon a time, in the big, green jungle of
Gorillaland, I lived with my mom, Mama Grace.

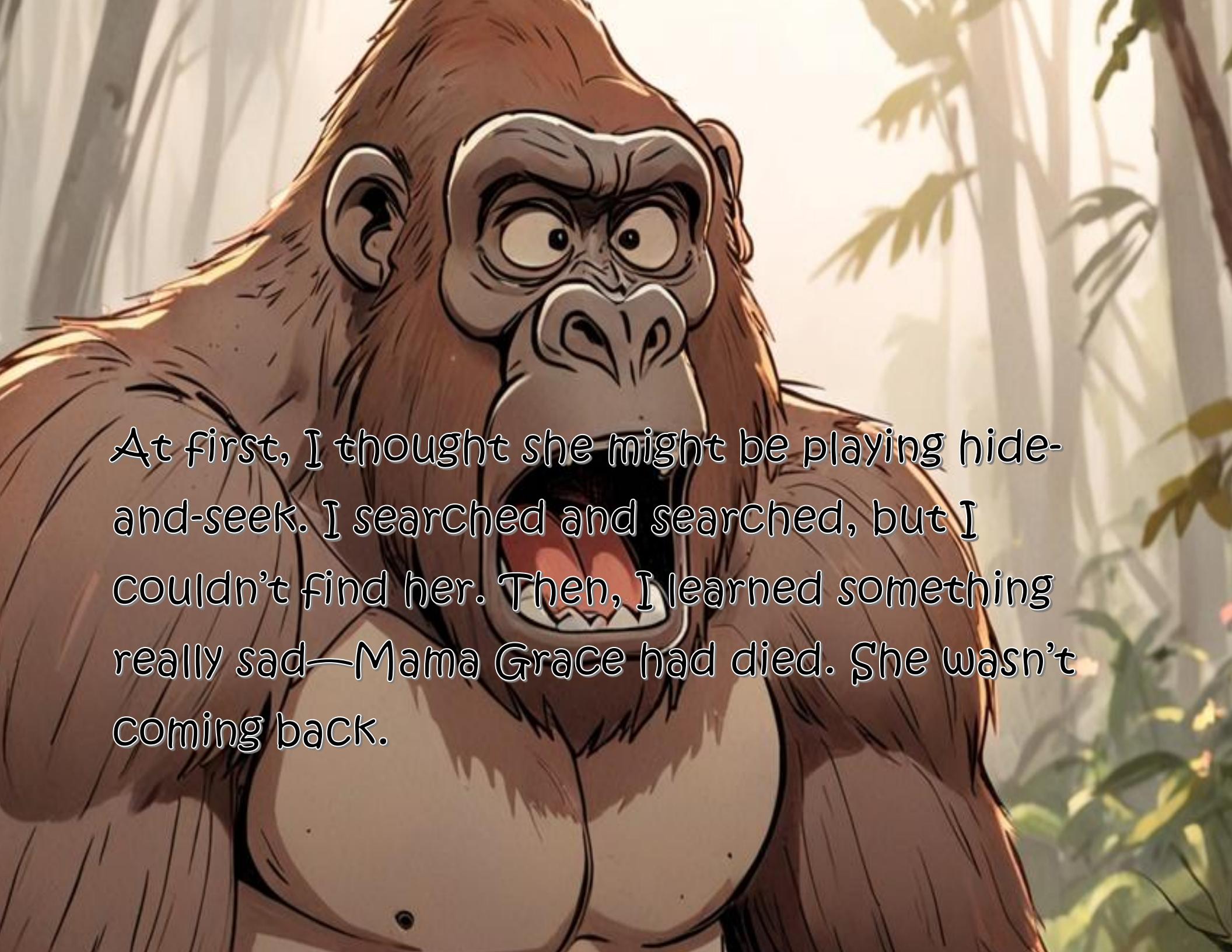


She was the best mom ever! We loved to play, explore, and laugh together. Her hugs felt like warm sunshine, and her smile was the brightest in the whole jungle.

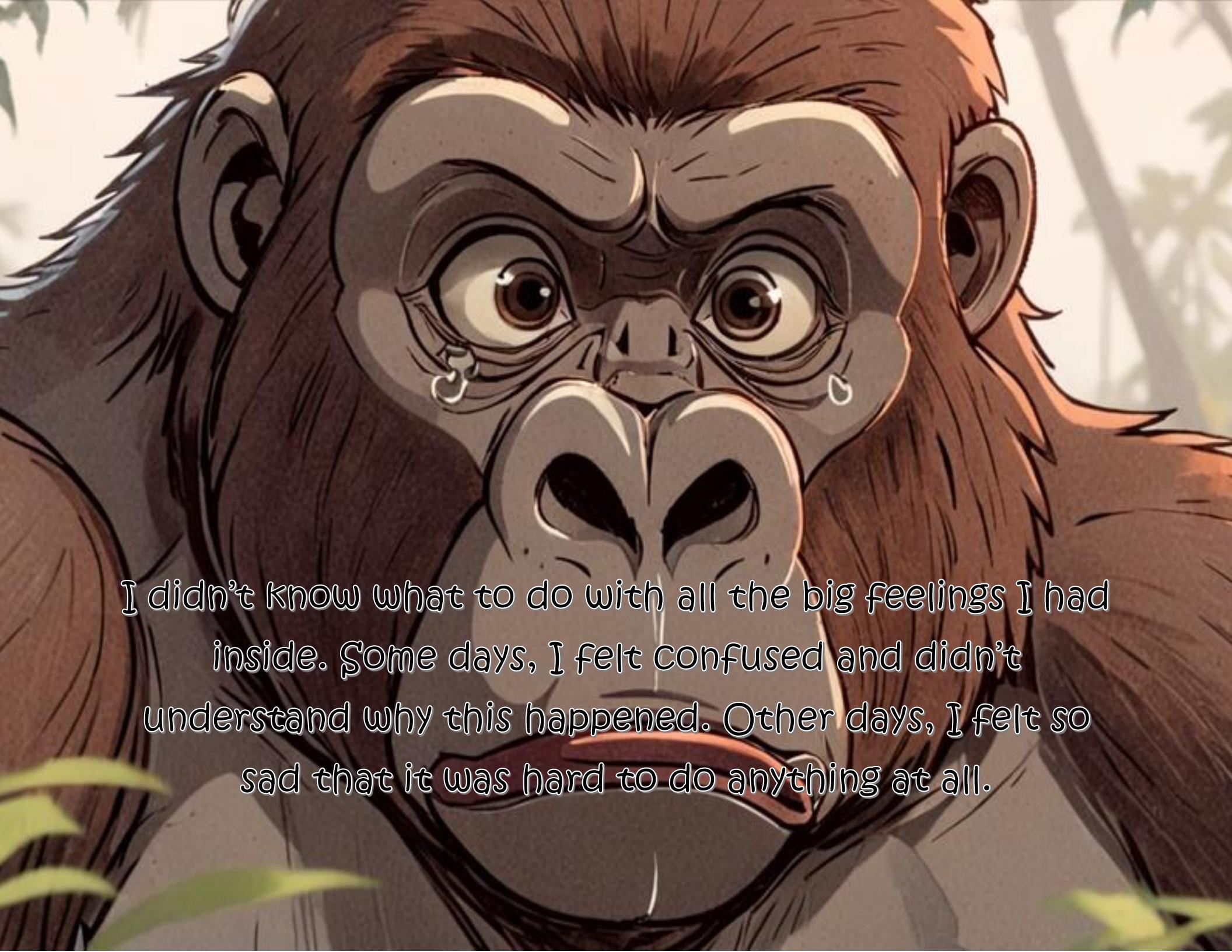


But one morning, when I woke up, Mama Grace wasn't there. I called her name, but she didn't answer. My tummy felt tight, and my heart felt heavy, I was alone.

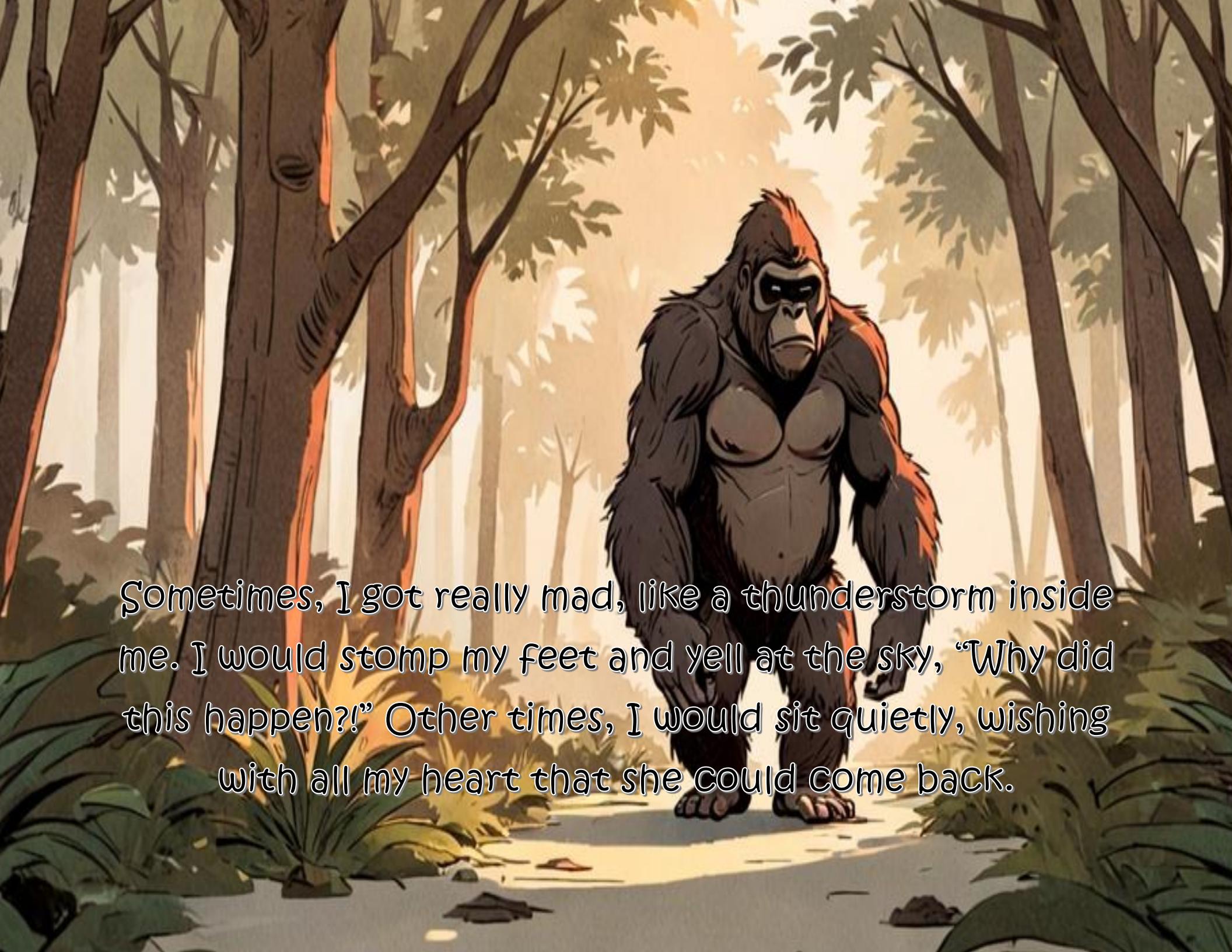




At first, I thought she might be playing hide-and-seek. I searched and searched, but I couldn't find her. Then, I learned something really sad—Mama Grace had died. She wasn't coming back.



I didn't know what to do with all the big feelings I had inside. Some days, I felt confused and didn't understand why this happened. Other days, I felt so sad that it was hard to do anything at all.

A large, dark brown gorilla stands in the center of a jungle clearing. It has a thick coat of hair and a prominent brow. Its expression is weary and slightly sad. The background is filled with tall trees and dense foliage, with sunlight filtering through the leaves, creating a warm, golden glow.

Sometimes, I got really mad, like a thunderstorm inside me. I would stomp my feet and yell at the sky, "Why did this happen?!" Other times, I would sit quietly, wishing with all my heart that she could come back.

A vibrant illustration of a jungle setting. On the left, a large, brown gorilla with a prominent brow and a white patch on its chest looks towards the right. In the center, a small, brown monkey with a white belly sits on the gorilla's hand, looking back at the gorilla with a smile. In the bottom left foreground, an owl with large, expressive eyes and a hoot-like calligraphic mark on its wing is looking up. In the bottom right foreground, a chimpanzee with dark brown fur and a white patch on its chest is looking towards the center. The background is filled with lush green foliage, palm trees, and several colorful flowers in shades of orange, yellow, and red.

But even though Mama Grace wasn't with me anymore,
I wasn't alone. My jungle friends tried to help. The
cheeky monkeys made funny faces to cheer me up.
Wise old Hoot the owl told me it was okay to feel sad
or mad, and that it's normal to have lots of different
feelings.

A lush, tropical jungle scene under a bright sun. A river flows from the background towards the foreground, its banks lined with dense green foliage, palm trees, and large leafy plants. In the distance, a range of mountains is visible through a hazy sky filled with soft, white clouds.

As time went by, I started to notice something.
My feelings were a bit like the jungle's rivers—
sometimes calm, sometimes rushing and
splashing, but always moving.

A large, brown orangutan with a thick mane of hair sits on a light-colored rock. It is facing right, with its head turned slightly to look over its shoulder. The background is a dense jungle with various trees and foliage, some with yellow autumn leaves. The lighting suggests a bright day.

I also started to remember all the wonderful things
Mama Grace and I did together. Her love felt like a
warm glow in my heart. Even though I couldn't see her,
it was like she was still with me in the jungle.

Little by little, I found ways to enjoy the jungle again. I played with my friends, explored new places, and felt happy sometimes. Missing Mama Grace didn't go away, but it became part of my story, just like the trees and rivers are part of the jungle.

A vibrant illustration of a jungle scene. In the foreground, several gorillas of various sizes are walking through a field of tall grass and colorful flowers in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The gorillas are brown with dark hair. In the background, there are large trees with green and yellow leaves, and a bright blue sky with white clouds and small black birds flying. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

Now, I'm Gus the Grief Gorilla. I share my story with others who feel sad and miss someone they love. I tell them it's okay to have big feelings—sadness, anger, or even wishes. I also remind them that love never really goes away. It stays in our hearts, forever.